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(ST. LOUIS, MO) – Russ Carnahan (MO-3) released the following statement in response to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announcement of special disaster assistance for Missouri veterans affected by recent tornadoes:

**“I’m glad to see this offer by the Department of Veterans Affairs to help to those who fought to defend our country, as they begin the process of rebuilding homes and businesses.**

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**“This Memorial day, as we remember those who died protecting the United States and its people, it’s important also to remember our commitment to returning warriors.□ And in times of need – such as the recent storms in Joplin and across Missouri – we should redouble our efforts to keep that commitment.□ This announcement and the aid it brings is a fulfillment of our sacred promise.”**

Assistance will take the form of support for VA-guaranteed home loans for those affected by recent storms. The VA will encourage mortgage companies not to initiate any new foreclosures in the disaster areas for a period of 90 days, and also to extend every possible forbearance to borrowers.

Veterans are encouraged to contact their insurance company as soon as possible to file claims for losses, and to contact their mortgage companies to let them know the circumstances. Veterans should also start the FEMA disaster application process as soon as possible by calling 1-800-621-3362. Low interest loans, cash grants, and housing assistance may be available from agencies associated with the disaster recovery effort. The VA has information available on its web site ( [www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans](http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans) ) that provides basic guidance on options veterans should consider following a major disaster. Veterans may also contact their nearest VA Regional Loan Center at 1-877-827-3702.

*In 2010, Russ Carnahan was one of only 20 “exceptional leaders” to earn a perfect A+ rating on veterans’ issues from the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Action Fund. He is a member of the Health Subcommittee on the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.*

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